

College of the Holy Cross CrossWorks

Holy Cross Choirs Newsletter

Music Department

Fall 10-2017

Holy Cross Choirs Newsletter (Fall 2017)

Choir, College of the Holy Cross

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Holy Cross Choirs

Volume 1,
Fall 2017

New Director Spotlight!

Professor Allegra Martin

As the newly appointed Director of College Choirs here at Holy Cross, I am excited to be joining this vibrant campus. The warmth and welcome I have received from staff, faculty, and students has been delightful and I am eagerly looking forward to all the musical experiences we are going to share.

We have already had several performances on campus. We started off the year with Choir Week, where all interested members of the College Choir, including fifteen first-year singers, joined together during the week before classes for five days of rehearsing, activities, and bonding. At the end of that week College Choir performed at Fall Convocation, and we also joined our friends in Chapel Choir to sing in the Mass of the Holy Spirit under the baton of the new Director of Liturgy and Music, Laurence Rosania. **(cont. on page 2)**

Chamber Singers Event Spotlight

James Falconer '19

Antigone in Ferguson was an extremely rewarding opportunity for all involved. First and foremost, we got to learn some pretty awesome gospel music that still gets stuck in my head 2 weeks later. Second, we got to adventure over to Williams College AKA Prof Martin's alma mater and sing in their gorgeous performance space. The acoustics were awesome and the stage was plenty big enough to fit the HC singers as well as the Antigone choir and 2 massive choirs at Williams. Third, we met some amazing and inspiring people who were part of the Antigone choir. It was amazing that music is what brought together this group of people. It was originally just the St. Louis Police Department choir, but they were joined by other singers, some who at the time of Michael Brown's death were even protesting the very officers they later performed with. The passion they had for both their music and their cause was contagious. While we really felt their love for the music every time we sang with them, it was strongest during the final song of Antigone, I'm Covered. From the moment that song started, I personally started getting emotional. As the message of the song, that every person is saved and united when covered in the blood of Jesus, was conveyed, there was not a dry eye in the whole chapel. To this day I cannot come up with words to describe the emotions I felt singing that final song. The only thing I can think to say is that it was a moment where music connected everybody in that chapel. It might have sent a different message to each person, but each person was touched by the music and that's what made the moment special. While I may not experience a moment like that again in a while, I'm glad Antigone in Ferguson touched me the way it did.

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Chamber Singers has also been busy; on October 1, members of our Chamber Singers joined the Phil Woodmore Singers from St. Louis in a performance of *Antigone in Ferguson*, a very moving production of Sophocles' play where the Greek choruses were re-imagined and composed by Mr. Woodmore as gospel numbers. And we are looking forward to our Family Weekend concert, which is called "Prophets and Dissidents: Voices of Visionaries," and features music by Benjamin Britten, Harry Burleigh, Ysaye Barnwell, Felix Mendelssohn, and Martin Luther, among others.

Since I don't know many of you, I thought I'd take a moment to introduce myself. Being on this campus and working with these singers feels like a culmination of many of my own past experiences. I attended Williams College in the 90's, where I double-majored in music and physics, and being on the Holy Cross campus often reminds me of my own undergraduate days; the campus size, academic intensity, great views, and warm relationships are all very similar. I earned my Masters degree at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ, and recently I was in Illinois where I finished my doctoral coursework at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Before moving to Illinois I worked in Boston for many years at a number of different choral jobs, both singing and conducting, including teaching at Lasell College in Newton, directing the women's chorale Cantilena in Arlington, and serving as the music director of First Parish Cohasset. I am happy to be back in Massachusetts, which is my home state, and to be enjoying a New England fall again.

Finally, I hope you will reach out to me and introduce yourself. I would love to get an e-mail from every one of our alumni, introducing yourself and telling me about your experiences with singing at Holy Cross. Knowing what you valued in your time here can help me create wonderful new experiences for our current students. I hope to see a few of you in St. Joseph's Chapel on October 27, and I wish you all a very musical fall!

Upcoming Concerts!

Friday, October 27th, 8 P.M.:
"Prophets and Dissidents: Voices of Visionaries," St. Joseph's Chapel

Thursday, November 9th, 8 P.M.:
"Voicings: Choral Combinations,"
Brooks Concert Hall

Thursday, December 7th, 8 P.M.:
"Lessons and Carols," St. Joseph's Chapel*

*Please join us via livestream if you cannot attend the concert in person! (Details to come on the Holy Cross website).

Did you know? 2 fun facts about our upcoming concert pieces!

The bass solo in *Wanting Memories* was written by and for a female bass!

The words to *Rejoice in the Lamb*, the festival cantata by Benjamin Britten, were written in an insane asylum!